

(A)  
**LETTER**  
OUT OF  
**Lancashire**  
TO

**A Friend in London,**

*Mr. Wagstaffe  
the Author*

GIVING

Some Account of the Late Tryals  
there: Together with some Seasonable and  
Proper Remarks upon it.



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Recommended to the Wisdom of the Lords and  
Commons Assembled in Parliament.

*J. D. Thomas  
Wagstaffe filius  
Auctoris natu  
map.*

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*Among my People are found Wicked Men, they lay wait, as  
he that selleth Wares, they set a Trap, they Catch Men,  
Jerom. 5. 26.*

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*And they watched him, and sent forth Spies, which should  
feign themselves Just Men, that they might take hold of  
his Words, that so they might deliver him unto the Power  
and Authority of the Governours, Luk. 20. 20.*

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## A LETTER from Lancashire, &c.

S I R,

**H**OW astonishing soever the Report of the Late *Tryals* in our Country, was with you at *London*, I can assure you the thing it self was no less astonishing here, but must more deeply affect us, according as it was more sensible to us; and when we saw with our eyes, and heard with our ears, the great Scene of Villany, acted by a few Miscreants, which this or any Age hath known, it struck us with greater Horror and Amazement than any *Narrative* could, or can do, how true or full soever.

I do fully agree with you, That such things as these do highly deserve the Inquiry and Inspection of a *Parliament*, both to drive this Mystery of iniquity to its true *Originals*, to search into the Springs which influenced such grating *Tools and Instruments*, and comforted and supported them in this Infamous and Hellish Design, and also to make such effectual Provision for the future, that Innocent Men may hereafter be secur'd from having their Lives and Estates sworn away by a Pack of *Mercenary Villains*.

In Answer therefore to yours, and to give them the best satisfaction I can, I shall in the first place give you a short Account of the Material Evidences on both sides, and then in the next place, make some proper Reflexions in order to discover the Principals, or who set these Monsters on work, were the Fomentors and Abettors of the Design, and more guilty than the vile Instruments themselves.

But before I enter upon this, I must Acquaint you of one necessary Defect; that what I am going to say unavoidably labours under; I mean there is something I would, but cannot describe, and that is the *Transcendent and Unparalleld Impudence of Lunt and his Partners*; I can tell you their Words, and the *Material*

erial parts of their Evidence, but the *Form*, the Audacious Boldness with which they delivered themselves; the *Brow of Brass* far surmounts all the Language I was ever Master of, this therefore you must supply, and conceive as well as you can; and if you have any Conception of Atheism and Blasphemy, if a sear'd Conscience of the Air of Hell, and Obdurateness of Devils, from all together perhaps you may frame some Idea of it. And this you are to conceive to be as the *Soul* to the *Body* of their Evidence, the whole in the whole, and the whole in every part of it. And if to all and every Word of it, you joyn the highest *Impudence* to the *Perjury*, it is the least Calculation I am able to give you.

Thus (after the Formalities of the Court were over, as reading the Commission; Calling over the Jury, &c.) on *Thursday* Morning Sir *Giles Eyres* gave the Charge; I shall not give you the whole Speech, as not necessary, or if it were so, not possible; for though it was taken in short-hand, yet Sir *Giles* took care to prevent the spreading, by tearing the Books of all those he observ'd to write, yet what concern'd the immediate Matter, was, that after an extolling the Justice of the Court, the Folly of disturbing it, &c. he told them, That was the Treachery of their Ungrateful Countrymen which brought the trouble of a special Commission upon them, that some of the Conspirators were Protestants of the Church of England, as they called themselves; and though Popery and Protestantism was like the Image of Nebuchadnezzar, whose feet was Clay and Iron, which would not mix well together, yet that here they did both agree to disturb the Peace, but there might be at least a lengthening our tranquility, and that others (deceiv'd by their Punishment) might hear, and fear, and do no more so wickedly, it was put into the hands of the Jury, to Hear, and to Accuse for these Crimes which would be sworn before them: And Concluded, that he hoped they would so behave themselves, that they should not need any Commendations from him, but that their own Works should praise them.

In the Afternoon the Grand Jury found Four Bills of Indictment, One against Sir *Rowland Stanley*, Sir *Tho. Clifton*, Mr. *Dickenson*, Mr. *Langton*, and Mr. *Blundel*, and the other Three against the Lord *Molineaux*, Sir *William Gerard*, and Mr. *Walmsley*, severally, upon Oath they were all Arraign'd, Sir *Will. Gerard* with great importunity begg'd Time till *Saturday* for his Tryal;

but was denied. and Ordered to prepare for his Tryal the next Morning by Nine: A Proposal was then made to the said Gentlemen, Whether they would be Tried severally, or jointly, and one of them Challenge for all, and they desired Time till next Morning to give their Answers, and a Copy of the Pannel, which was granted, and a Copy delivered them, which contained about an Hundred Names. The next Morning being brought into Court, they agreed to the Proposal, provided the Kings Council would shew the Cause of their Challenges at the same time they made them, otherwise they would each of them insist on their Challenges; but that was denied, and the Court told them, that unless they would without any Conditions submit to the Proposal, one of their Tryals should immediately begin. This forced them to give their Consent, and then the Court told them they should be Tried next Morning, and Ordered them to be taken away. And immediately after they were gone, upon the Motion of Mr. Aaron Smith, the Court Ordered near a Hundred more to be returned upon the Jury, and threatened the Sheriffe if he did not do it, and it was done accordingly.

An Order was also given to the Clerk of the Crown, That no *Sine Panna's* should be made for any of the Prisoners, until the Names of the Witnesses were first brought to some of the Judges, or to Mr. Aaron Smith.

On Saturday Morning the Prisoners were brought to the Bar, and the said Gentlemen put upon their Tryal; 120 of the Jury appeared, and the Kings Council Challenged every Person who was either a *Member of Parliament, Deputy Lieutenant, or Justice for the Peace*. The Names of some of them are, Sir Edw. Chiswell, Mr. Farrington, Mr. Maudesley, Mr. Blackburn, Mr. Molinax, and in all to the Number of Thirty Eight Men of great Note and Consideration in their Country, and (which makes it more strange) have been active and rigorous for the Interest of the Government in their respective Stations, and more particularly as Commissioners for the raising of Money. The Gentlemen only Challenged Twenty Four.

After the Jury was fixt and Sworn, &c. the Witnesses gave their Evidence: The first for the King was *Lunt*, the Substance of whose Evidence was this, That in June or July (which he is not certain) 1689. he delivered several Commissions from King James to the said Gentlemen, met together at a Grand Consult,



Consult at my Lord *Moleneux's* House at *Croxton*; upon which being ask'd, whether he knew that these Prisoners at the Bar, were the Persons to whom he delivered the Commissions: He swore that he knew them all very distinctly and well, and that these were the very Persons. Sir *W. W.* for more satisfaction to the Court and Jury, bid him point out Sir *R. Stanley*, *Lunt* pointed to Sir *Tho. Clifton*, and said that was Sir *R. Stanley*; upon which there was a great Hum among the Spectators. But to rectifie this, he was ordered to take the Cryers staff and lay it upon the Head of Sir *R. Stanley*; he took the staff, and (though prompted by his Fellows; and had what intimation was possible from the Judge) yet he layd it on the Head of Sir *T. Clifton*, and with unparallell'd impudence, said he was Sir *R. Stanley*. However Sir *George Eyres* excused this, and said, *There was no great matter in that mistake, for that those Gentlemen were together at Croxton, and were together at the Bar, and the mistake of one for another, was no great matter*: So on he went, and swore he delivered Commissions to those Gentlemen, to be Collonels, Captains, Lieutenants respectively, that they receiv'd these Commissions with joy, and kiss'd them, &c. and each gave him 5 *l.* that they advis'd with him what Method to take to Raise the Men, and at last concluded to send him to *London*, to List what *Irish* and others he could; and accordingly he went and List'd 60. and bought Arms to the Value of 50 *l.* being supplied with Money by Mr. *Whitplace*, by Order of the Prisoners, and who had direction from them to let him have what Money he had occasion for; that upon his return these Gentlemen thanked him, and afterwards sent him to *St. Germans* to acquaint *K. James* and the Lord *Melfort* with the forwardness of Affairs in *England*; that *K. J.* dispatch'd him back again to acquaint his Friends how soon he would be with them; that upon his return to the Gentlemen, each made Answer that they wished for that hour, seeing all of them had compleated their designe.

The next Witness was *Womble*, who (being a Carryer) swore that at several times he carry'd down Arms to these Gentlemen, that he came to know them to be Arms, for that a Black Mare of his going to drink, fell into the Water, so that he ventured to open the Box to see what damage the Goods had, and perceived them to be Arms; that being found a Trusty Man he was often employed afterwards on the same occasion, that some of the Boxes were directed to Mr. *Dickenfon*, others to others, and that he saw them take their Proportions upon the Delivery:

The next was *Wilson*, who swore that he was employ'd to wait for the Landing of *Lunt*, and to conduct him where those Gentlemen were, who finding them at *Croxton*, saw Mr. *Lunt* deliver the Commissions to them, which they joyfully receiv'd. That he saw several of the Men list'd by *Lunt*, who quartered up and down, and that he was very well acquainted with those two, who were at Sir *R. Stanley's*; and in short, in all things he corroborates *Lunt's* Testimony.

The next was *Brenerton*, who swore, that having in *Ireland* serv'd *K. James*, he having no further Service for him, he came for *England*, and being well entertained by those Gentlemen, received at their hands a Commission from *K. James*; That whilst *K. James* was at *Las Hague*, he was at *Worrell*; and Sir *R. Stanley* used to give him Money, as several Sums at 3 times, 10*l.* 5*s.* 15*s.* which he looked upon to be given him, that he might be ready when *K. James* Landed. And this the Judge (out of pure Charity to the Prisoners no doubt) called *Subsistance Money*.

The Evidence for the Prisoners, though not in the same Order (which is needless) but in Substance, is as follows :

One *Parsons* testified that *Lunt* promised him 150*l.* if he would Swear to what he would have him.

Mr. *Leigh Banks* testified, that he was introduc'd into *Lunt's* company by Mr. *Taffe*, that *Lunt* seem'd well pleas'd at it, and would needs have him oblig'd to Secrecy. That *Lunt* told him, he might if he would have been in *Dodsworth's* Plot; that he had two, *Womble* and *Wilson* to back his Evidence; but because they were ignorant Fellows, he would turn them off, if he could but get 2 or 3 Gentlemen (like himself) who would better manage his Business, and bring his Plot to a better Conclusion. He ask'd him, if he could write well, if he could, he should be employ'd in writing Commissions; for he could get an Old Commission of *K. James's*, and a Pass from my Lord *McLiffort*, and they might easily counterfeit their Hands. He promised him great Rewards, and put him in hopes of the Gentlemen's Estates. And that if *this* rock, he would go all over *England*, and Impeach distinct men in their several Countries.

Mr. *Taffe* (who brought Mr. *Banks* acquainted with *Lunt*, and was privy to *Lunt's* Designs) confirm'd in all points Mr. *Banks's* Evidence, and added that *Lunt* complain'd of the blockishness of *Womble* and *Wilson*, and swore they knew no more than what he had prompted them to; and that *Lunt* gave as a Reason why he went to seize Mr. *Leigh of Lime*, that he might know him, and his House, when he came to the Tryal.

Mr. *Dickenson* going to give his Evidence, pass'd by *Lunt*, and said to him, Dost thou know me? To which *Lunt* reply'd; God d— thee, I thought thou hadst been an honest Man than to have betray'd me. He testify'd that by Mr. *Taffe's* means, getting into *Lunt's* company, *Lunt* asked him his Name; who reply'd *Howard*. An honourable Name, said *Lunt*, it will be for the Merit of the Cause. Then he asked him, What is your Religion? Of the Church of *England*, said *D.* That's well, said *Lunt*, then you must swear you received a Commission from Mr. *Leigh of Lime*, because he is a *Protestant*. Then he asked, whether he knew these Gentlemen? Yes, (said he) very well. That's well said *Lunt*: I my self have delivered a Commission with my own Hands to one *Roger Dickenson* (being the Person to whom he spoke, under the disguise

gnized Name of *Howard*, do you know him likewise? Yes (saith Mr. D.) I know him extraordinary well. Then, saith *Lunt*, things will go on finely.

What Respected the general Credit of the *King's* Witnesses; it was proved by many Credible and unexceptionable Witnesses; That *Lunt* was a *Begamist* and a *Highway-man*. To which the Judge said, That signified little, because these Persons knowing it, did not prosecute him. That *Womble* swore he would have the Blood of *Papists*; and he got 100 *l.* per Annum by Swearing; That he stole Money at *Crosby*, when he went there to search, which Money drop out of his Boots when the Messenger caused him to be searcht. That *Wilson* was a *Thief*, and stole 4 Cows; and the Record was produc'd in Court of his being burnt in the *Hand*. That *Breuckton* had often swore that Sir *R. Stanley* was a *Jew King Fellow*, because he would give him no Money, but he would be even with him one time or other.

What respected the Time and Circumstances of the Fact charged upon those Gentlemen, it was proved beyond Contradiction.

That Sir *R. Stanley* was at his own House in *Cheshire*, and not in *Lancashire* all that Year that *Lunt* swore that he was at *Croxson* that in particular, for the months of *June* and *July* he was seen in Bed Morning and Evening, proved by his Lady's Woman, and his *Valet de Chambre*. That the rest of the Prisoners were actually in Custody in *Manchester* at the same time, and many months after, that *Lunt* swore they were at *Croxson*. That Mr. *Wilmshy* was at that time, and two Years before and after in *France*.

These Particulars I give you in short, but they were plainly prov'd, and sufficiently convinc'd the Jury, and indeed all who heard the Tryal.

From all together you may please to observe what Infinite Care was taken to destroy these innocent Gentlemen, and to Ruine their Families forever. For, 1. Here was as fine and plausible Contrivance as could be fram'd, and one part made to hang to another so artificially, as might make it seem probable to, and take with the Jury. *Lunt* he delivers Commissions from *King James*; *Wilson* was by and saw the delivery, and knew some of the men raised by virtue of them; *Breuckton* received a Commission from them, and *Womble* carry'd the Arms in pursuance of the Design. This it must be confessed was compleatly laid, and was sufficient to Hang a whole Country.

2. The Judge in his Charge endeavouring to prepossess the Jury, and to perswade them, and to insinuate to them, as if the Fact charged upon the Prisoners, had been Notorious and Self-Evident, as is plainly the design of his Speech, and the meaning of his Words.

3. The adding near a 100 men to the Jury, after the Prisoners had a Copy of it, and after the Court had made a particular agreement with them, to take their Tryals jointly, and not severally.

4. The King's Council challenging all the Members of Parliament, Justices, Deputy-Lieutenants, and leaving none of the Jury, but men of inferiour Rank, and

and there was not one *Gentleman* of the Jury, or one who poll'd as such, which is a plain case that these men were thought too noble to be entrusted with an Affair of this Nature. And if to this I may add,

5. That after all Mr. *A. Smith* said, That if he had been of the Jury, he would certainly have brought them in guilty every man of them. And I suppose he may be believ'd without swearing.

And yet notwithstanding Providence so ordered the Matter, that the Gentlemens Lives were not only sav'd, but that it hath also fastened an indeleble Steyne of Infamy on the Witnesses, and all their Abettors.

Sir, here you have in short, the Portraiture of this black Villany; so far, I mean, as appears bare face'd: But you conceive (and I think rightly) that there is a great deal more behind the Curtain, some secret and invisible Springs which moved the Machine, some who contriv'd the Business, prompted these ungodly Instruments, and taught them their Lesson, and abetted them in the Prosecution and Management: And this brings me to the second thing you seem to require my Sentiments of, viz.

What may be offer'd in order to the discovery of the *Principals*, who set them on work, and were privy to the Secret, and accessary to the Guilt: And this you think worthy of the Wisdom of a *Parliament*, and certainly it is so, if any thing be so; for such Practices destroy not only all our *Liberties*, but our *Lives* also at once: And if such Rogues shall be countenanc'd, pension'd, and taught to swear against innocent Men, our *Laws* and *Priviledges* are not our safety, but ruine; give me an Hundred Arbitrary Kings, rather than to lye at the Mercy of an Arbitrary Rascal, who will swear himself to the Devil, and any Man out of his Life for a Soit of Fine Cloathes, and Money to spend at a Tavern; and our *Liberties* are fine things indeed, when they are under the Power of such Men who have Conscience enough to swear any thing, and Wit enough to learn the Lesson that is taught them.

And therefore in Answer to this Particular, I shall enquire into these Two Things.

1. Whether it be any means probable that these Men were the Contrivers of this wicked Design: and if not, then,

2. What Marks and Characters may be layd down to assist us in judging of this Matter, and where these are found, it is highly probable, that those are in the bottom, or at least, it is worthy the best inquiry of the Parliament whether they be or no.

In order to the First Inquiry, I shall consider the Character of the Persons, and the Nature of the thing.

1. The Character of the Persons, they were these Four, *Lunt*, *Womble*, *Wilson*, *Brenerton*; *Lunt* (the Principal, and on whom the rest depended) was a Coach-man, *Womble* a Carryer, *Wilson* a Tapster, *Brenerton* a Sadlers  
Premice,



*Prentice*, and who ran from his Master. And are not these Men rarely qualified to make a *Plot*, and set it so artificially together? If it be said the subject of their Evidence was Matter of Fact, and so not above their Capacities. Right, and this shews the Cunning of the Contrivance; for it would have been extremely ridiculous to have brought these men to have given Evidence concerning Mysteries of State, and Councils of Princes: But a *Commission*, and *Arms*, and such things were within their Sphere; and a Carrier may be qualified enough to know a Pistol from a Sword; and a Box of Arms (if the Box be open) from a Box of Sugar-Plumbs. But this is not the Case: Their Capacities are not question'd, for knowing one thing, or one man from another, (although *Lunt* was a little mistaken in that matter) but for the whole Contrivance, and I hope there are more Brains and Politicks that go to the making of a Plot, than to the meer swearing to it, which only requires a hard Forehead, and a little Memory, and no Conscience: The Web was artificially weav'd, and the Design laid well enough, and had certainly carry'd their Point, and Hang'd the Gentlemen, had it not been for the Folly of the Instruments, which is one argument more for their incapacity for the Contrivance: For *Lunt* is a Fool as well as a Coach-man, and his being so easily taken and div'd into, his opening the whole matter to Mr. *Bark*, and Mr. *Dickenfon*, whom he had never seen before; as it was the Providential means to discover the Villany, so it apparently shewed the Contrivance could be none of his. The Inquiry therefore turns upon this Point, here is a plain and undoubted Contrivance apparent to all Men, and granted by the Court it self, very artificially and closely put together, the Evidence exactly set according to the Form of Law, &c. And if any man in his Wits can think that such Men as these were the Principal Authors, he may with as much reason conclude that Coachmen and Tapsters are qualified to make Secretaries of State, Lord-Keepers, and Archbishops.

2. Another thing to be considered, is the Nature of the Thing. And here (I think) it will not be inquired, whether any Man will Forswear himself, meerly for the sake of Forswearing, and the great delight and satisfaction he takes in Perjury, or murder Men by false Oaths, because he loves to see them Hanging on the Gallows, how wicked so ever men are; This is incompatible with humane Nature, and a strain beyond the Devils themselves. And therefore I may take it for granted, that *Lunt* and his Fellows did not conspire to give their Souls to the Devil gratis, or indeavour to swear half the Gentlemen of a Country out of their Lives, meerly for the pleasure of seeing them hang'd. And therefore whosoever will resolve to think that These are the Principal, or the Only Conspirators, in compliance to the common Reason of Mankind, is bound to assign some Cause that might provoke them to so Flagitious a Villany. And I believe the Wit of Man can find but two, either Revenge, or Reward. As for Revenge, it is a terrible Passion indeed, and

prompts men, under the power of it, to do any thing; but then it hath its proper object, and is never exercis'd upon men who never injur'd, nor disobligh'd us. And what Injury or Disobligation had the 4 Conspirators receiv'd from these Gentlemen? why truly no more but this, that *Breuerton* had said that one of them was a *making Fellow*, and would give him no Money; which is but a poor Reason for such a terrible Revenge: And yet he swears that he gave him 30 *l.* at several times. But let that pass, what is that to the Rest of the Gentlemen? did they ever refuse him any Money? or did he ever expect any from them? and yet he Swore against all the Gentlemen, as well as against that *One*. And what is this to the other 3 Conspirators? was ever *Lunt*, or *Womble*, or *Wilson*, disobligh'd by them? why truly not at all, and it plainly appears that *Lunt* (the Principal of them) was so far from being disobligh'd by them, that he had never seen some of them (perhaps any of them) all his Life. So that whatever else may be assigned as the occasion of this *Bloody Conspiracy*, Revenge could be none of it. And then as for *Reward*, This in truth is a Reason probable enough, and in all likelihood the only Reason: But then I doubt this will extend farther, and involve others in the Guilt. Who Rewarded them? who promis'd and encourag'd them? These are material Questions, and more fit to be spoke to in the next Head, which is,

2. The Laying down some Marks, to direct us to the Discovery of the other Conspirators and Abettors in this Hellish Design.

And the First Inquiry may be this, Who maintained these *mean Fellows* at that Splendid Rate? *Lunt* the Coachman was habited like a General, nothing finer or richer, with his *Footman* to attend him, and his other Expences were proportionable, and he lived at the rate of a Thousand pound a Year. *Wilson* the Tapster kept his Gelding, and took his Pleasure like a Man of Rank and Estate. *Womble* said he had a 100 *l. per Annum* for Swearing. And the other was maintained with equal Proportions: And what was all this for, think you? Money is not so plentiful at this time of Day, to be squandred away for nothing. And a man may honestly suppose that such profuse Largesses were not exhibited to them out of pure Love to their Persons; something was to be done by them that might answer the Charges, and wherein the *Paymasters* might find their Account. And surely when men Swear honestly and truly, there is no such need of *Greasing* and *Daubing*: But it must be confess'd a *false Oath* wants pampering, and high feeding: and when men are provoked to Forswear themselves, they need supply from time to time to keep up their Spirits against the Reluctancy of their Consciences. This is a dreadful Cafe in a *Christian Nation*, and deserves the utmost Care of the Parliament upon a Double Account.

1<sup>st</sup>. To Examine thoroughly what becomes of the Money they have given, and to what Uses applyed, lest it be diverted to harbour and cherish Profligate Rogues to cut their own Throats.

2dly. It is the most infamous and shameless Practice, and unsufferable among civiliz'd People, that *Beggars* and *Villains* should be maintain'd like *Lords* and *Gentlemen*, for no other reason or purpose, but to Swear away the Lives of other Men. Whoever Bribes his Witnesses, demonstrates the Injustice of his Cause, and renders their Testimony suspected; and what can be said of this Scandalous Practice to keep a *Fund* for *Perjury* and *Murder*. It is high time for the Parliament to look about them, when these Courses grow every day upon us; the Cases of *Fuller*, *Tong* and *Blacket* were enough to open our Eyes, but when the same things are multiply'd upon us, and the same Game played over again by a New-Set of Instruments, we must be more than stupid, if we do not see the design against our Lives and Fortunes. And in truth things are now come to that pass, that there is scarcely a Rogue in the three Kingdoms, but when he finds Hunger and Want pinches him, but hath his Resolution ready; why forsooth, he will not starve, and then he goes to set up the Trade of Swearing, to supply his VVants, and maintain his Vices. And this, it seems, is a sure and easie way, and there is a Stock ready for all Comers; it looks as if there were a *Bank* for Swearing, to promote the Trade, for it is all their Cry, *We shall have Money enough*; But surely it becomes the *Wisdom* of the *Nation* to see from whence, and by whom all these great Sums are supply'd; for this is not only to Licence Perjury, but to purchase it; and it is a certain rule both in Divinity and Law, that he that bribes and supports a false Oath, is not only consenting to it, but more guilty than him that swears it.

2. We must yet further consider the Character of the Persons, but in another Capacity, not as to their despicableness and meanness, but with respect to their Morality, and Infamy; *Wilson* was a common Thief, and Burnt in the Hand in that very Country where he gave his Evidence; and *Lunt* a Highway-man, and hath two Wives. Sufficient to destroy their Credit with all wise and just men: and whoever makes use of their Evidence, will, by all indifferent men, be suppos'd to have the same design with them. Now although a Man may be a very great Villain, yet if at the same time his Crimes are secret, another man may credit him himself; and proceed upon his Testimony, and yet be very innocent; but this I doubt, can never be said of a Person, who sufficiently *knows* his Villany, and yet makes use of him, to the destruction of others. And this is apparently the Case, *Lunt's* wickedness was open and notorious, he was indicted upon the Statute for having two VVives, and the Bill was found, and Mr. *Aaron Smith*, one of the Prosecutors, becomes his *Bail*, though the Case was *Felony*, and not only so, but when *Lunt* came to be tryed, he and his Bail both forfeited their Renognissances, which is a demonstrative proof, not only that *Lunt's* Infamy was known to the Prosecutors, but that for his sake they eluded the Law, and skreen'd him from the sentence of it. And this I think, will deserve the Inquiry of a Parliament, upon more accounts than one; for 'tis certainly a terrible Case, unheard of by *English* men,

men, not only that *Criminals*, under the immediate prosecution of the Law, should be made Evidences against mens Lives, but that the Course of Justice should be obstructed in favour of a job of *Perjury*, they were to undertake.

To which may be added,

3. The mighty hunt that was made about the Town by Officers and Messengers, after Men who said any thing tending to the reproach of the *King's Witnesses*, together with *Warrants* of a strange and illegal nature, to seize & take up Men & their Papers for *Conspiring and endeavouring to suborn* (as the *Warrants* word it) *Witnesses* against the Lives and Credit of several *Witnesses* for their Majesties, against Persons charg'd with High Treason; Upon which some very worthy and considerable Men were taken up, and kept close Prisoners for some time, and are yet under Bail, contrary to all Law and Justice: But the plain design of this was, not to terrifie men from speaking what all the Town knew, but, by taking up as many as they could meet with, to prevent any Persons going to tell the Truth at the Tryal, and confront their Evidence. And any man, who considers these Methods, can never doubt, but that, if they had but known the *Gentlemen's Witnesses*, they would have taken care to have stop't their Mouths, and by such *Arbitrary Warrants*, have coop'd them up close Prisoners, from whence they should never have been freed, till the *Gentlemen* had been hang'd. And it is very observable that these *Warrants*, and *Spies*, were sent abroad in every Corner, but a little before the *Gentlemen* were carry'd down to their Tryal. But Providence so ordered it, that those, whom they Principally aimed at, escaped their Fingers, and the *Gentlemen*, notwithstanding all their foul indeavours to the contrary, had honest men enough to detect the Falshood of the pack'd Evidence, and to save their Lives. Now put these two together, the Direct and Actual obstruction of Justice in the case of *Lunt*, and the great indeavours to do so in the Case of these *Gentlemen*, by imprisoning their *Witnesses*, and that too by illegal and arbitrary methods, and I will leave it with any man, whether those Persons, by whose Influence all this was done, can be excused from being *Encouragers* and *Abettors* of this Bloody Design, if not the Principal Contrivers and Promoters of it. He that *stretches* the Law in point of Life, is a down-right *Murderer*, and here we have no less than a threefold violation of the Law, and all to take away the Lives of Innocent Men: and let those Persons, who have been concerned in such Practices, discharge themselves from the Imputation, if they can.

4. The Great Promises that were made in this particular, deserve Inquiry, Mr. *Parsons* testifies that *Lunt* promis'd him 150*l.* to Swear, and Mr. *Banks* that he promis'd him great Rewards, putting him in hopes of the *Gentlemen's Estates*. Now upon this, this Question arises, VWho could make good these Promises? who could give such great Rewards? In short, who could give the *Gentlemen's Estates* to these Varlets, had they been convicted by their *Perjury*?

But



But it is more fit for me to leave these Questions to the Inquiry of a Parliament, only I shall leave these Remarks to their serious Consideration.

1. That whosoever Rewards Perjury and Murder, is guilty of them.
2. That those Persons, who promised these Gentlemen Estates to these Miscreants, must be satisfied themselves of the Perjury, because the Reward was otherwise so vastly disproportionate to the undertaking.
3. That if such Temptations shall be laid in the way of Rogues to promise Gentlemen Estates to those who will Swear them out of their Lives: If the Lords and Commons do not take care to obviate it, there is never a Lord nor Commoner can be safe, so long as there is an Estate, and a Rogue in England.
5. It deserves to be considered, That the Warrants for the Execution of these Gentlemen were Sign'd, and there were Directions given, that they should be Executed 3 Days after their Condemnation. From whence these things are obvious: *First*, That the Projectors thought themselves sure of their Business, and well they might, when they had taken so much care to instruct the Evidence, and to prevent the discovery of their Infamy. *Secondly*, That the Design was plainly laid for Blood, and which they were resolv'd to have, whatever came on it. And therefore the Gentlemen were to be dispatched, before any Applications could be made either for Pardon, or for respiting the Sentence: and before the Inconsistency, Contradiction and Falshood of their Witnesses Testimony could be known, which even after Sentence, in justice, ought to have preserv'd them from it. But it seems the *Wise Contrivers* thought it was good to be sure, and to prevent all after-claps, they were forthwith to be *Hang'd out of the way*; which is a manifest evidence of a Deep and wide Confederacy to take away their Lives. For *Thirdly*, it is impossible that any thing of this, (of signing the Warrants for Execution, and Orders to do it so hastily) could be ascrib'd to *Lunt*, and his Accomplishes, and consequently must have some other *Authors*, and who these are will be very easie for the Eye of the Parliament to discern. To this may be added:
6. That at the same time, there were black Warrants sent down to take up two hundred Gentlemen more in the Counties of *Lancaster* and *Chester*, in order to prosecute them for their Lives by the same Methods. And this was to have been put in Execution so soon as the other Gentlemen had been dispatch'd, which makes the Design as plain, as the Nose in a Man's Face, and directly points to the Managers and Contrivers: And surely it seems to me as if there was a design to root out all the Gentry of England, at least to many of them, who did not stand fair with the Contrivers, or would not comply with whatsoever they should propose to them. As *Lunt* vannted, that *so soon as he had made an end of this business, he would go all over England on the same Errand*. And this is the plain state of the Case, a Plot was to be had at any Rate, and because they could not find one, they made one themselves, and these Gentlemen were to be *hang'd* in Confirmation of it, and then they thought they had

the Kingdom was stirring; and whoſeever ſhould obſtruct their *Arbitrary* Courts, or not agree to all their Demands, how unreaſonable ſoever, it was but ſwearing them into the *Plot*, and there was an end of them. The *Tyranny* of this highly deſerves Conſideration, it was juſt before the preſent Seſſion of *Parliament*, and in all probability, the *Money Bill* will not paſs ſo eaſily, at leaſt in ſuch proportions, as ſome Men may require. ſuch prodigious Sums having been given already, and the Kingdom exhauſted to the very Bones; but here was a Method to ram it down their Throats, the *Deſtroying Evidences* hang over their heads, and there was no *Medium*, either *Give* or be *Hang'd*. And are we not in a comfortable Condition; and have great reaſon to Triumph in our Freedom, when a few *Perjur'd Villains* were ſet up and maintain'd to over-awe the Parliament, and to bring the Gentry to their Bow, or elſe to depopulate the Nation. It is a fine Device, to hang up ſome to terrifie others, to ſet up the *Devil of Evidences*, to ſcare People out of their *Liberties*: If this be not *Slavery* with a Vengeance, no man living knows what it is.

Theſe are Conſiderations antecedent to the Tryal; but there are ſome which are ſubſequent to it, and deſerve to be conſider'd, for the further unmasking this *Bloody Villany*: They are theſe Two for the preſent, and no doubt but Time will diſcover more.

1. It deſerves to be Conſidered, who they are, that are extremely *diſpleas'd* and *diſſatisfied* that the Tryal did not take effect, who are very *angry* and *peruſh* that the Gentlemen are not hang'd; ſome there are who hang down their heads, and grief pinches them, others fume and fret, and are very wrathful: But theſe carry their *Masks* in their *Foreheads*, and any Man may know them. And it is certain, whoever wiſhes the Deſign had ſucceeded, or is ſorry and uneaſie that it did not, is guilty of the *Perjury* and *Murder*, if not of the *foreſaid Contrivance*: But which I chiefly aim at, is the exceeding *Diſturbance*, that the Miſcarriage of this Deſign, creates to ſome ſort of Perſons, which plainly indicates, that they themſelves are in the bottom, they find their Meaſures broken, their Plots defeated, and turn'd upon them; and this is that which ſtrikes to the quick, and grates their Heart ſtrings. By their *Puſes* you may diſcern the Motion of their *Hearts*. Would not you think it a very harmleſs, at leaſt, if not a very pious thing, for Men to rejoice, when they ſee innocent Men eſcape a Bloody Contrivance layd for their Lives? And yet at *Manchester*, when the Country gave Teſtimonies of their Joy, for the Acquittal of theſe Gentlemen, with what Horror and Confuſion did it ſtrike the Proſecutors? whereas every Man is equally concern'd, and ought to be equally pleas'd for the clearing of wrong'd Innocence. In like manner, at *Cheſter*, when the Priſoners were brought to the Bar, the Gentlemen of the Country in great Numbers accompanied them, to teſtiſie their reſpects to them, and the rather, by reaſon of the great Injury had been done them, Mr. Juſtice *Eyre* was exceedingly diſpleas'd

pleas'd at it, and in great passion said, *He did not know who were the Prisoners from the other.* And when the Gentlemen were discharged by Proclamation, there was a great shout among all sorts of Persons, *Ladies, Gentlemen, the Clergy and Commonalty*: This, it seems, was a mighty Provocation to Mr. Justice, and he could no longer bear it; but told them, *That this should be neither for the Advantage of the Gentlemen, nor those that attended them; and in particular said to the Clergy, that they deserv'd to have their Gowns pull'd over their ears.* Bless us! What is the Matter? Cannot Men rejoyce to see innocent Men pull'd out of the Paws of Harpies, but they must be menaced with Vengeance, and have their Gowns pull'd over their ears? It is well for the Gentlemen that they had ~~no~~ Gowns, or else they might have been threatned to have been pull'd off; but though they had no Gowns, there was something else they had to be afraid of; and this is the next Consideration.

2. A Reform of the *Justices of Peace* and of the *Militia* in these 2 Countries is now on foot, and under Consideration, and most, if not all the *Justices*, and *Deputy-Lieutenants*, are to be turned out; it seems these Gentlemen had no more wit, but they must discountenance *Perjury*, and rejoyce at the happy delivery of their Friends, Neighbours and Relations, and now they must pay for it; for it plain they are *disaffected*. By whose power and influence these things are done, I shall leave to the Wisdom and Inquiry of the Parliament only I humbly crave leave to add this one Remark, - That from hence it appears that some Persons are passionately disturb'd at the Miscarriage of these *Goodly Evidences*, that for the *Disappointments*, they are resolv'd to be *Revenged* on the *Two whole Counties*.

Now, Sir, let us put all these together, and Consider, if you please, the *Incapacity* of these mean Fellows to make, or manage this Plot, the *Inconceivableness* of mens *Perjuring* themselves, and *Murdering* Men, for the sake of these Villanies. The *maintaining* these *VVretches* at a most Profuse and Extravagant Rate, the *Notoriety* of their former Villanies; the *Illegal Courses* to clap up the *VVitnelles* which should confront them; the *mighty and prodigious Promises* to encourage them to go through with it; the *Signing of Warrants* for hasty Hanging them before they were convicted, or tried; the *Blank Warrants* for taking up a great Number more, so soon as they had been Executed; the *Mighty Passion and Disturbance* for the *Disappointment*; the *turning out of the Officers of Justice*, and the *Militia* in both the Counties; the Plain Effect of a very *keen Resentment*, I say put all these together, and then answer your self, whether these four Rascals are the Only or the Principal Contrivers of this Curfed Design; or whether they were only *Tools* and *Instruments* to put in Execution what others had contriv'd for them, and put them to act.

Thus

Thus, Sir, you have the Case plainly before you, there is only one part yet remaining, and that is, *The effectual Provision for the security of innocent Men hereafter*: This I shall say little to, because the Wisdom of the Parliament will soon contrive it, when they take it in hand, and espouse it heartily. *A strict Inquiry into this Plot, and Exemplary Punishment of all who are found Guilty, is one good Means*; and a *Bill for Regularizing Tryals in Cases of High Treason*, is another, wherein it may be provided, That the Prisoner shall have *Counsel*, a *Copy of the Indictment*, and of the *Jury*, *sufficient Time* for his Defence, and the *Summoning his Witnesses*; and wherein it may be made highly Penal, to Obstruct, or Imprison any of the Prisoners Witnesses: That in it likewise some Care may be taken of preventing this *Recess* *Liberty* to indigent Men, which is a Temptation to the Poor, and to Bait for Rogues: But I shall not supersede the Debates in PARLIAMENT, nor prescribe to their Wisdoms; but I hope I may presume to leave with them this single Consideration, That these Practices are not only to the great Dishonour of GOD, the Scandal of Christian Religion, the Ruine of the Nation, and all the Civil Liberties, but that they themselves (not as Trustees and Representatives, but) in their proper Persons, are more immediately concern'd to guard, and find out some Defence against them; and they cannot but see themselves directly liable, as their Persons and Fortunes are higher and greater; Estates are Criminals more than Men. And though *Young* and *Blackett* are gone, though *Lunt*, *Womble*, &c. are defeated, yet there are Rogues enough in England to be had for Money.

I am, SIR,

Your Humble Servant.

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